
**Economic Development,
Agriculture & Trade Committee**

HB 2082

Brief Description: Regulating the disposal of animal carcasses.

Sponsors: Representatives Pettigrew, Holmquist, Kristiansen and Linville.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the Department of Ecology, Department of Health, and other state, local and federal agencies to develop emergency rules for routine, nonemergency animal carcass disposal by August 31, 2005.

Hearing Date: 2/25/05

Staff: Meg Van Schoorl (786-7105).

Background:

As a result of the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) incident in Washington in December 2003, the Departments of Agriculture (WSDA), Health (DOH), and Ecology (DOE) began working together on the issue of emergency disposal of diseased animal carcasses. As part of their work, they began reviewing current state disposal laws, rules, and emergency response plans.

According to a WSDA report to the Governor called the "Disposal of Dead Animals Study," each of the departments have statutes that impact the disposal of dead animals, but there is no statute that directly deals with routine disposal of dead animals. The WSDA administers a statute related primarily to the rendering of dead animals, and has rulemaking authority covering emergency animal disposal. The State Board of Health has statutory authority for developing rules and standards related to health hazards in the disposal of wastes, which would include animal carcass disposal. The DOE has responsibilities that impact animal carcass disposal under its solid waste, water quality, and clean air statutes. Some local health departments use the DOH and DOE statutes and rules to regulate animal disposal in their counties. There are federal agencies as well that have authority and responsibility over animal carcass disposal.

The WSDA's "Disposal of Dead Animals Study" states that with multiple agencies involved, there are some overlapping and conflicting roles, responsibilities, and regulations in the area of routine animal carcass disposal. Distinctions are not clear as to disposal of diseased or contagious animals compared to routine disposal. Guidance to the agricultural industry and the public is

limited as to alternative methods of disposal. The study recommends that consideration be given to legislation that directly addresses routine animal disposal; that the legislation and rules allow for a variety of disposal methods to be used by the livestock industry; and that clear, consistent regulations and a specific contact point be designated to give guidance to farmers and ranchers.

Summary of Bill:

By August 31, 2005, the WSDA is required to adopt emergency rules covering all routine, nonemergency animal carcass disposals. The WSDA must develop the rules in collaboration with the Departments of Ecology and Health, as well as other relevant state, local and federal regulatory agencies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 20, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.